

Statement of Michael D. Cohen, Esq. to the U.S. Senate Select Committee on Intelligence on September 19, 2017

Thank you for inviting me to speak with you today.

As part of this statement, I would like to accomplish two things.

First, I want to comment briefly but clearly on the presumed subject of this morning's interview. Second, I want to address what I believe are the implications of it.

Let me be totally clear that I am innocent of the allegations raised against me in the public square, which are based upon misinformation and unnamed or unverifiable sources.

I have never engaged with, been paid by, paid for, or conversed with any member of the Russian Federation or anyone else to hack anyone or any organization.

I have never engaged with, been paid by, paid for, or conversed with any member of the Russian Federation or anyone else to hack or interfere with the election.

I have never engaged with, been paid by, paid for, or conversed with any member of the Russian Federation or anyone else to hack Democratic Party computers; and I have never engaged with, been paid by, paid for, or conversed with any member of the Russian Federation or anyone else to create fake news stories to assist the Trump campaign or to damage the Clinton campaign.

Given my own proximity to the President of the United States as a candidate, let me also say that I never saw anything - not a hint of anything - that demonstrated his involvement in Russian interference in our election or any form of Russian collusion.

I emphatically state that I had nothing to do with any Russian involvement in our electoral process.

In fact, I find the activities attributed to the Russian Federation, if found to be true, to be an offense to our democracy.

As an attorney, I believe justice ought not to be politicized in the United States of America - neither in this Senate office nor in the courts. I'm certain that the evidence at the conclusion of this investigation will reinforce the fact that there was no collusion between Russia, President Trump or me.

I'm also certain that there are some in this country who do not care about the facts, but simply want to politicize this issue, choosing to presume guilt - rather than presuming innocence - so as to discredit our lawfully elected President in the public eye and to shame his supporters in the public square...this is un-American.

I am here today to reiterate my own innocence regarding the false allegations raised against me. What I seek is the Committee making a public conclusion about the truth or falsity of the allegations that follow.

My reputation was damaged in December 2016 when BuzzFeed published an unverified dossier prepared by a retired British spy - Christopher Steele - that was riddled with total falsehoods and intentionally salacious accusations.

In my opinion, the hired spy didn't find anything factual, so he threw together a shoddily written and totally fabricated report filled with lies and rumors. The New York Post recently noted that much of the information in the dossier appeared at points to be copied from the internet; with typographical errors included.

My name is mentioned more than a dozen times in the lie-filled-dossier and so within moments of BuzzFeed's publication, false allegations about me were plastered all over the national and international press. The accusations are entirely and totally false.

A core accusation was that I had traveled to Prague to meet with Russians regarding interfering with the election.

I have never in my life been to Prague or to anywhere in the Czech Republic. I might also add that I only have one passport (a United States passport). I have to say that to you today - that I only have one passport - because another media outlet suggested that - as a Jew - I must also have an Israeli passport!

Aside from such an allegation being incredibly offensive, it is also totally wrong.

Let me tell you where I was on the day the dossier said I was in Prague.

I was in Los Angeles with my son who dreams of playing division 1 baseball next year at a prestigious university like USC. We were visiting the campus, meeting with various coaches, and discussing his future. Media sources have been able to confirm these facts and I can provide you with proof.

My wife and I have been married for 23 years, and are now entering into the season of our lives when we get to watch our children become adults themselves. My daughter, who is at an Ivy League school, and my wife, who is of Ukrainian descent, have especially been subjected to harassment, insults and threats ... some so severe I cannot share them in mixed company.

You might say that the experiences I am living through are the cost of being in the public eye, but they shouldn't be as I am not a government official. Many Trump supporting Americans are also paying this cost, like the twelve year old child in Missouri who was beaten up for wearing a Make America Great Again hat.

You can oppose the President's points of view and policies, but not raise false issues about the validity of his victory.

I assume we will discuss the rejected proposal to build a Trump property in Moscow that was terminated in January of 2016; which occurred before the Iowa caucus and months before the very first primary. This was solely a real estate deal and nothing more. I was doing my job. I would ask that the two-page statement about the Moscow proposal that I sent to the Committee in August be incorporated into and attached to this transcript.

I'm very proud to have served Donald J. Trump for all these years, and I'll continue to support him.

If we really are concerned about a Russian attempt to divide our country and discredit our political system then the best thing we can do is put aside our infighting, stop presuming guilt rather than innocence of American citizens, and address this national security threat as a united people at its source.

Otherwise, the priorities of the American people will continue to be neglected, and the Russians will use our distraction to continue to harm us from the shadows while we harm each other in front of the camera lights.

I look forward to answering all of your questions today.

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